

A N

## A C C O U N T

O F T H E

English Nightshades,  
And their Effects.

With the original Case of Dr. *Lambergen*,  
as delivered in his inaugural Thesis.

A L S O

Practical Observations on the Use of *Corrosive  
Sublimate*, and *Sarsaparilla*; on the diffe-  
rent Effects of *Mercury Crude*, and  
when prepared by Chemistry.

A N D

Some Hints offered to the Faculty, on the Cure of  
the *Lues Venerea* by the Secretion of Urine  
instead of Salivation.

By WILLIAM BROMFEILD,

Surgeon to her Royal Highness the Princess Dowager of  
Wales, and to Saint George's and the Lock Hospitals.

L O N D O N :

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[Price Two Shillings.]



T O

JOHN RANBY, *Esq;*

*Serjeant Surgeon to his Ma-  
jesty, &c. &c.*

S I R,

SHOULD I attempt to  
compliment you on your  
great abilities in our profes-  
sion, I am persuaded, I should  
risque your future friendship:  
the world, however, could not  
suspect me of flattery, as those  
abilities are universally allowed,  
and

## DEDICATION.

and confirmed by the highest honours due to merit.

I own, I take some *pride* in laying hold on this opportunity of informing the public that it was from you I received the first rudiments of my chyrurgical knowledge; but *gratitude* alone, abstracted from every other view, would be sufficient to point out to me the person to whom I should dedicate this first fruit of his own instructions.

It will not, I hope, be thought culpable in me to avail myself of this slender claim to your protection, since a performance of this nature  
may



# DEDICATION.

may require the sanction of the most eminent in the profession. If it should be so fortunate to meet with your approbation, it is the utmost ambition of him who has the greatest pleasure in subscribing himself,

Sir,

Your much obliged and

Most obedient humble Servant,

WILLIAM BROMFEILD.

Conduit-Street,  
Hanover-Square,  
Nov. 29, 1757.

2017 / 11 / 07

1. The first part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function  $f(x)$  defined by the equation  $f(x) = \int_0^x f(t) dt$ . It is shown that  $f(x)$  is a constant function and that  $f(0) = 0$ . The second part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function  $g(x)$  defined by the equation  $g(x) = \int_0^x g(t) dt$ . It is shown that  $g(x)$  is a constant function and that  $g(0) = 0$ . The third part of the paper is devoted to the study of the properties of the function  $h(x)$  defined by the equation  $h(x) = \int_0^x h(t) dt$ . It is shown that  $h(x)$  is a constant function and that  $h(0) = 0$ .

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## P R E F A C E.

**W**HILST medicine is dealt out by a skilful hand, the publick have experience and judgment for their security; but when ignorance becomes the dispenser, the health of the people depends on a slender thread.

The empyric who sells his drugs, and the unskilful pretender to medical knowledge, who, even gives away his Remedies, are equally injurious to the common weal: humanity and charity, I am thoroughly convinced, are the great incentives with many of these in their distributing of medicines to the poor; but would they apply their mite with propriety, it would answer much better,

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better their intention of relieving the distressed.

The legislature have wisely ordained laws to punish those whose rashness or sordid views should risque the lives of the subjects of these kingdoms, by vending dangerous compounds; but where people mistake their talents, and intend a benefit, remonstrance only can be necessary.

Many families, happy in the possession of prescripts to make up the salt of wormwood draught or some febrifuge with nitre, amuse themselves occasionally in compounding them. Was this all, possibly little mischief would ensue; but when they assume judgment, and give them indiscriminately for every feverish complaint, they often interrupt nature in her good offices, and thereby entail misery on a favourite child, an indigent neighbour, or some valuable servant: there are many minute circum-



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circumstances to be considered, before medicines deemed inoffensive should be given; otherwise physick and food might as well be retailed from the same shop.

The *Solanum* has of late been recommended to us internally as a safe medicine, attended with success in many desperate cases, that would not yield to other remedies: this, with the little art requisite in the preparation of the infusion of that plant, have induced many unskilful persons to make trial of it: consequently, much mischief must have ensued; and as its effects on farther experience have been found pernicious, it is the duty of every honest man to alarm the public of their Danger, where this remedy is injudiciously given.

The *corrosive sublimate Mercury* is again introduced into practice as a specific in venereal complaints. The *Formula* for the solution has escaped

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scaped the hands of those who know how to administer it with safety ; and the chemists and apothecaries lads retail it with as little concern as they would a glass of simple water. Would people reflect but one moment on the expectations they have from their medicines, they would then know it is the greatest rashness and folly they are guilty of, in hazarding their health and lives by trifling with such dangerous weapons.

Some, to my knowledge, have paid dear for this experience on themselves : a remarkable instance I have seen very lately, in a young gentleman who was his own prescriber, and not finding the symptoms yield to several doses of the solution he had taken, concluded a farther quantity was necessary ; accordingly repeated it, till he had taken upwards of three quarts, which had nearly destroyed his constitution without conquering the disease. The danger  
to

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to which the public might be exposed by the rash use of medicines of power, has been the occasion of the present remarks; in which I am far from desiring to discountenance all remedies whose use may be attended with hazard: what I would wish to inculcate is, that few remedies are fit for the ignorant, because most of them are capable of doing harm in the same degree as good; but, that of all others, those which may be fatal, when injudiciously administered, should be reserved for the practice of such as have both judgment and experience. This led me to offer my sentiments on the use of the *corrosive Mercury*, which has, almost insensibly, drawn me into a short account of the different effects of *Mercury* in general on the human body. I make no doubt but that many gentlemen of the profession have made the same remarks in their practice as I have set down at the



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end of this treatise, but possibly the wanting of opportunities sufficient to establish the facts has prevented them from publishing their observations.

There are not any persons so blinded by prejudice, as the projectors of schemes, or the espousers of particular remedies; therefore, to avoid partiality in favour of a system I had adopted, the diaries of the effects of *Mercury* on the secretions, and the success, were almost always taken by some other gentlemen of the profession. The facts have been confirmed in such numbers of instances, that to relate them might make me suspected of some private views. It is possible, that some may think me rather too absolute in my assertions, yet when they are assured that many years experience, and not an hypothesis, is the basis of my authority, I flatter myself that the candor of the public will free me from any censure of that nature. I was  
the



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the more inclined to give these hints, as I had been informed, that several of the profession were inclinable to adopt the practice from the accounts they had receiv'd of its success in the *Lock-Hospital*; and many mistaking the intention of cure, had misled others by their misrepresentations of the method. I make no doubt but some will accuse me of not being sufficiently explicit in the plan laid down; to such I shall not make any other apology, than that I am well convinced, that every gentleman of the profession who is qualified to make use of *Mercury*, will understand me extremely well; and if *they* should find any thing worthy their attention in this treatise, I shall think myself amply rewarded for any trouble I have been at in putting down my sentiments on paper.

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As the case delivered by Dr. *Lam-bergen* in his inaugural Thesis, was the inducement to the use of the *Nightshades* in *England*, I imagine it will be more satisfactory to the public, to see it in his own words, than in a translation, I have therefore taken the following quotation from Dr. *Haller's* works, lately published at *Lausanne*.

Triginta quatuor annorum honesta mulier, per tres annos jam vidua, temperamenti sanguinei, capillitio subrufo, sana satis, sed nervorum systema facile mobile habens, ac in morbos inflammatorios proclivis admodum, ita ut sexies jam anginam inflammatoriam gravissimam, suppuratione bis etiam terminatam, & semel peripneumoniam sævissimam, passa fuerit; semel quoque alterutrius malæ violentam inflammationem ex odontalgia acerbiorē natam habuit; quæ omnes inflammationes toties semper feliciter discussæ fuerunt, absque ullius mali vestigio relicto. Hæc ex mammarum ulcere & suppuratione ter antea graviter admodum se ægrotasse referebat: prima vice, ante octo circiter annos, dextram mammam fuisse suppuratam, & ingentem puris copiam ex illa tum profluxisse narrabat. Secunda vice quod eadem mamma fuerit suppurata, sex anni erant, & tertium suppurata fuit ante quinquennium, quando eodem tempore simul sinistra mamma fuit suppurata; atque ab illo tempore in hac dextra mamma remansere varii tumores

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mores duri, indolentes, scirrhusi, tactu tantum dignoscendi, licet tum in hac mamma eodem tempore septem aperta ulcera fuisse, & plus vices a chirurgo incisionem tam lanceola quam forfice factam fuisse adfirmaret. Intra septem matrimonii sui annos, duos filios totidemque filias enixa fuit: ultimus jam quadriennis infans, ante sesquiannum demum ablaetatus fuit (dum sæpius jam antea de ablaetanda citius puella quoque sed incassum fuerat admonita) ad illud sequenti casu demum coacta. Quodam die sana cum exiverat, circa vesperam domum ducitur feбри gravissima correpta, omnes artus vehementer admodum contremiscebant, quin & levioribus convulsionibus quatiebantur, cephalalgia aderat immanis, & summus totius corporis æstus: mamma sinistra (quam solam lactebat infans, dextram enim post suppurationem fugere noluerunt) rigida, æstuans; urens, acerbissime dolens, uno verbo horrendum in modum inflammata, atque adeo tumida & distenta, ut infantis caput facile æquaret. Omnia tamen hæc larga venæ sectione & remediis aptis, interquæ interpolatus fuit rarior infantis suetus, brevi sultuli adeo feliciter, ut nulla durities remanserit in mamma ad naturalem magnitudinem redacta, quantum anxio etiam instituto examine persentiscere potuerim. Per annum dein optime sana vixit, sed a quatuor vel quinque noviluniis, menses (qui decimo octavo ætatis suæ anno demum fluere cœperunt) parcius solito prodierunt, ac ab illo tempore in mamma dextra subinde sensit dolorem lancinantem, ad tempestatum mutationes imprimis urgentem; tandem etiam leniter tumere cœpit mamma. Præcipue vero tumorem & dolorem increvisse putat a tempore, quo ex mensæ in pavementum inopino lapsu valde perterrita fuerit. Postremum tumore ac dolore in dies incrementibus,



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bus, me consuluit. Reperi tum tumores illos du-  
ros in mamma dextra (quos antea tactu sæpius luf-  
traveram) mole jam multum auctos, in unum quasi  
tumorem confluisse, qui in superiore mammæ  
parte potissimum hærens musculo pectorali jam ac-  
crevisse videbatur; tactu etiam longe duriores erant,  
ita ut faxei quasi jam essent; neque hic tumor  
erat continuus aut lævis, sed scaber admodum &  
præruptus. Titillatio ac pruritus summus conti-  
nuo aderant; nonnunquam lancinans dolor acce-  
debat, qui sub axilla incipiens in ipso tumore fini-  
ebatur. Sub axilla glandula quædam scirrhusa  
etiam tactu deprehendebatur; neque sinistra mam-  
ma a tuberculo, seu durtie quadam scirrhusa, jam  
omnino libera erat. Color & calor mammæ cum  
reliqua corporis cute iidem; una tamen vel altera  
vena plus solito tumida videbatur. Motum in scir-  
rho ut sedarem, imposu ei emplastrum, compo-  
situm ex empl. diapompholygos unc. ij. amalgam.  
Mercurii & plumbi dr. iij. sperm. ceti dr. j. cujus  
quantitas sufficiens extendebatur supra alutam mol-  
lissimam pro emplastro mammæ applicando. Pul-  
veres præscripsi aperientes, blandos, anodynos, ex  
corall. rubr. antim. diaph. non abluto, & sperm.  
ceti ana dr. ij. laud. opiat gr. vj. pro pulv. no. xij.  
inde formandis, de quibus quolibet mane & ves-  
peri unum sumfit. Diætam præterea ei injunxi con-  
venientem, quam modice etiam servavit; dum in-  
terea minus adcurate inhærere poterat consilio meo  
de vitando omni nimio animi ac corporis motu ac  
opere; opus enim cum-primis, quod musculo pec-  
torali præcipue peragitur, ipsi interdixeram.

Per aliquot dies interea emplastrum hoc mam-  
mæ cum fuerat impositum, dolor ejus minui vide-  
batur, verum tumor ejus tamen non modo non  
minuebatur, sed potius paulum etiam augebatur



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ac tandem in superiore sua parte apicē quadam eminebat.

Ita se res habebant cum tempus mensium instaret, nisi quod circa medium tumoris, paululum versus inferiora, duos propemodum digitos transversos supra locum papillæ, (quæ ex ulceratione deperdita fere erat) ubi (quod notatu dignum, nulla eminentia aut major durities, sed e contrario locus, pro duritie tumoris, satis erat mollis) cutis color naturalis in rubellum mutabatur, ac sensim macula aliqua inflammata, vel leniter rubellâ in conspectum veniebat, quæ sensim magis rubescebat ac augebatur, usque ad magnitudinem chalci, (*Duit*) qui locus præ reliquis etiam pruriebat, & in quem omnes lancinationes, quæ subinde in mammam incidebant, terminari ipsi videbantur. Confusus me in levando hoc malo plus profuturum, si efficere valerem, ut menses in juvene hac fœmina rite & copiosius denuo profluerent, quam operosa aliorum medicaminum largitione: eum in finem quovis mane ac vespere, imo subinde & interdiu, balneo tepido pedum uti jussi, eo scopo, ut humorum copiam atque impetum a superioribus ad inferiora revellerem. Pulveres antea recensitos tum non sumebat, sed illorum loco dedi pilulas leniter emmenagogas eccoproticas, haud nimium tamen stimulantibus aut calefacientibus, factas ex Galbani crudi purissimi dr. j. myrrhæ opt. scrup. j. resinæ jalapæ scrup. j. aloës succotr. scrup. ℥. ac Elix. Uterin. q. s. pro formandis pilulis singulæ gr. ij. ut inde quolibet mane ac vespere sex, septem, vel octo sumeret, prout effectum illarum sentiret. Ex quarum usu semel vel bis quotidie alvum liquidam habuit. Per hebdomadem dum hisce sedulo usa fuerat, menses prodibant largius quidem, quam aliquot vicibus præcedentibus, sed solito tamen adhuc longe

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longe parcius emanarunt. Mensibus dein cessantibus, loco dictarum pilularum sub lecti introitum quotidie denuo sumsit unum ex antea dictis pulveribus; atque inde emplastrum continuo supra mamma relinquebatur, quotidie semel aut bis pollice manus æquatum, ne aliqua forte inæqualitas vel ruga mammam irritaret. Quoniam vero neque tumor neque dolor jam minuebantur, atque dictæ maculæ color ex rubello in purpureum sensim magis vergeret; fœmina præterea esset sanguinosa, & crebris venæsectionibus adsueta (uti ex antea dictis notum esse poterit) aliquot dies, postquam menses fluere desiere, ex vena pedis x circiter uncias sanguinis extrahi curavi, ea spe, ut motus ac inflammatio inde magis etiam sedarentur, tum quoque, ut naturæ defectum ita aliquatenus supplerem, eamque adsuëfacerem, ut stato tempore in posterum esset largior. Nullum ex venæsectione sensit incommodum aut commotionem, neque primis post illam institutam diebus ullum ex inde percepit levamen notabile. Verum enim vero aliquot dies post tamen mamma vix adeo tumida, vel tumor vix adeo durus, videbatur, & per aliquot dies vix dolorem sensit. Eminens illa apex eadem manebat semper, necdum tamen rubescebat. Vix paucarum interim dierum hæ fuere induciæ: prominens illa apex rubere demum etiam incipiebat. Pruritu etiam intolerabili, (ut serio præmonita a mammæ frictione se prorsus abstinere vix potuerit) ac dolore in dies auctis, adeo ut dolor jam continuus fieret, & atroces subinde lacerationes accederent. Color harum macularum dein in dies in magis livescentem degenerans, fatis indicabant monstri intus quid ali, & occultum hunc cancrum propediem in nervum erupturum, atque in apertum & exulceratum carcinoma transiturum.

In

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In desperato hoc rerum statu, mœstus, mulieris miserrimæ acerbissimum prævidens fatum, consilii proprii inops, imprudens curtam artis incusabam suppellectilem: atque nihil opis a principibus medicis ad has misérias promitti, dum mente volverem, animi dolor augebatur, & spes meliora detegenti turpiter abjiciebatur.

This is Dr. *Lambergen's* account of the case; and under these circumstances he consulted his friends Dr. *Dubois*, Dr. *Winter*, and Dr. *Van Arum*; who declared it a CARCINOMA.

Dr. *Degner* had in like cases used *Solanum Letbale*; therefore *Lambergen* gave it in this: he infused a scruple in ten tea-cups of water. The plant had been dried three years: one spoonfull of this, on his first trying it on himself, brought on a slight *vertigo* and a dryness of the mouth.

January 14, 1745, the Woman took the same Dose; this she continued to June 12, with external applications and was then well. She continued healthy, and suckled a child many years afterwards.



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The case here related, in my opinion, is far from being satisfactory as to its cancerous state: it plainly appears, at first to have been no more than common abscesses, frequent in inflammatory habits of body, which often suppurated: one severe attack in the other breast was intirely removed by bleeding and antiphlogistic remedies, which shews, at that time, it was a common *phlegmon*. When the *menfes* quit the fair sex, they are extremely liable to cancerous disorders, either in the womb, breast, or some other glandular part; but these are most frequently owing to their own misconduct: for at that time, instead of abating the quantity of blood, and diverting it from a part that cannot be any longer serviceable in that respect, they take forcing medicines from some female prescriber. Would they lay aside this ill-judged delicacy, and consult  
their



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their physician, it would be a great happiness for themselves, by preventing miseries consequent of improper treatment at that period of their lives.

I would by no means attempt to censure the skill and judgment of those gentlemen who saw the case mentioned by *Lambergen*; but we sometimes see large indurations of the breast, accompanied with great pain, &c. which put on a cancerous appearance; yet on using emollient ointments with *Mercury* to the part, bleeding and proper remedies internally, they have either dispersed, or kindly suppurations have come on, and different abscesses forming, have ended in happy cures. I am the more induced to think this case was not thought cancerous by them in the first stage of her disorder, when she laboured under suppressions; for which emmenagogues were given; her *menfes* returned at regular periods

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periods, and her health at length was perfectly restored. But even supposing it a cancer, a single instance can never establish a remedy: the author's silence for so many years on so interesting a subject, might incline one to think it has not proved successful on farther trials.

If the experience of others informs them of any material difference in the effects of *Nightshade* from the cases already published by which mankind may be benefited, I make no doubt but they will communicate their remarks to the world.

I shall be extremely concerned if the following pages should give offence to any, yet it may not be improper at the same time to disclaim all personal prejudice, and to declare that the only considerations which have occasioned my engaging in this affair are the public safety and the credit of the profession.

## I N T R O





*Woody Nightshade.*



*Deadly Nightshade.*



*Garden Nightshade.*



1800

August 1800

1800

1800

1800

1800

1800

1800

1800

1800

1800

1800

1800



AN  
ACCOUNT  
OF THE  
English Nightshades.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE practice of Physick in former ages laboured under the greatest disadvantages, as the ancients were little conversant with the laws of the animal oeconomy: but when the professors became more intimately acquainted with the human structure, every branch of the art received many advantages; and it must be allowed, that Surgery, particularly what relates to the operations, has of late years made great advances towards perfection; yet we cannot boast of any considerable lights from our modern writers

B in

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in those cases which have always been found difficult of cure. The frequency of these must incline every one not divested of humanity, when at the end of his medical knowledge, to try such remedies as experience has recommended to the favour of others in the profession. The most simple are not to be rejected: even those whose rash use may be attended with some hazard to the patient, in particular circumstances should be tried under the care of a skilful director.

The high encomiums given to several medicines in the writings of our ancestors, though now obsolete, have been often found just, and the medicines proved beneficial, in cases where the present practice had led us at a stand.

This I flatter myself will be received as a sufficient apology, for making farther experiments with the *Solanum lethale*; that we may be able to ascertain its properties when given internally. Dr. Lambergen's success in a remarkable instance, has been an inducement to several, to direct it,

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those cases which did not yield to the common remedies ; particularly, the physicians and surgeons of our principal hospitals. Any medicine endued with the virtues for which this plant has been of late so much extolled would be inestimable : but as time and experience alone can inform us in what cases it will be serviceable, and where prejudicial, its effects should be faithfully communicated to the publick by those who have made the trial.

The gentleman\* who has published a short account of its effects, writes with great candour and modesty : the flattering hopes of success in the patients to whom he had then given it, were sufficient grounds for him to expect great advantages to the publick, if those of the profession were acquainted with the observations he had then made ; and his zeal for the welfare of mankind, prompted him to an early publication. Had he waited

\* Observations on the internal use of the solanum by Mr. Gataler.



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till now, I am apt to believe it would have rendered this little treatise unnecessary. Many practitioners both in town and country, have greatly mistaken the intention of the author, by supposing, he recommends it as a cure in cancerous cases. He asserts, indeed, it had given ease: and would it always do that, provided it did not produce as bad complaints in return, it would be a most valuable medicine.

It is well known that opium, mercury, cantharides, and several other medicines may be ranged in the class of poisons; and when given in too large a quantity are attended with death. Yet were we disarmed of those weapons, we should find great difficulty to conquer several diseases, otherwise trivial ——— How innocent, and how salutary are these in their effects when judiciously administered? The indiscriminate use of any medicine will often produce mischief, as constitutions differ from each other: opium will sometimes instead of quieting, raise a delirium; camphor has occasioned convulsions.

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and yet by the judgment of the prescriber, these have been made, in the same instances, most powerful remedies.

The *solanum* by its espousers has been strongly recommended as endowed with a peculiar property as a *Deobstruent*, by increasing the natural secretions of the body; and consequently capable of removing all noxious matter: and it has been supposed preferable to any other, from its uniformity of acting.—I cannot say I find this to be the case in the practice of others, any more than in those patients to whom I have given it; but, on the contrary, that it is less so than any of the usual medicines given to promote sweat, urine, or stools.—The word *Deobstruent* will always carry weight with it in physick if a medicine be found to merit it: for it is certain that obstruction is the first cause of disorder in the animal machine; and that either attenuants or stimulants, adapted to the particular offices for which



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they are wanted, are usually employed in the different stages of the disease : for though stimulants, when obstructions are recent, may remove them ; yet if they are permitted to accumulate by length of time, those medicines would certainly increase the malady, if their efforts were unsuccessful. Consequently attenuants, at that time, are the only alternative to give a chance of cure. Now, *Deobstruent* I imagine implies the power of both.

I am thoroughly convinced that no one secretion in the animal body can compensate for the defects of another ; tho' the increased quantity carried off by others will often obviate a plethora ; and the ill consequences of any particular excretory being obstructed, may sometimes be prevented from rising to any considerable height by medicines : but these can only be called palliatives. Should the kidneys neglect doing their office, or total suppressions of the urine happen by disorders of the urethra, we know that patients are greatly relieved by profuse sweats,



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which are extremely offensive, and are plainly urinous: but though the tension for a time is abated, yet the patient is never well till the usual passage for the urine is obtained. So when the blood is not properly depurated of its bile by the liver, nature makes various efforts, both by the skin and kidneys, to get rid of the excrementitious matter; but we never arrive at the standard of health till the bile passes freely into the intestine again.

Great Numbers of invalids daily present themselves to hospitals, whose cases by experience are found to be but little relieved under the usual courses of medicine: it cannot then be matter of surprize that every practiser of physick should immediately embrace a remedy so strongly recommended as a specific in opening every outlet of the body.

Whatever may be the fate of the *solanum* from the experiments to be related, I do assert, if the greatest at-

## viii INTRODUCTION.

tention and candour, skill and integrity, and I might add partiality in its favour, in those gentlemen I have known use it, ~~it could~~ contribute to find out its medicinal virtues, it has had every advantage that could be wished by its strongest advocates.

As the experiments made at different seasons of the year have not proved similar in their effects, possibly some may chuse to make farther trials: I have therefore added a plate of the different species of the Nightshade found in England; and as I always intended to take the botanical account from *Dr. Hill's* works, I thought it but right, in justice to him and the publick, to request the favour of him to pen that part himself. This he not only most readily complied with, but has wrote the descriptions from nature; and to prevent any mistake in the kinds, has engraved the plates with his own hand. The accuracy of the performance renders any encomium from me unnecessary.

S E C T







flower, which is long and hollow in the deadly Nightshade, separated it from the others, under the name of Belladonna.; and *Linnæus*, from lesser distinctions, under that of *Atropa*: but nature has united them by their general character; and the garden, and deadly, in their effects.

The common Nightshade sometimes has its leaves hairy; and the woody, when it grows in reach of salt water, shews them of a paler and more greyish green; but these are only accidental varieties of the those two species: the three plants first named are the only distinct English kinds.

## C H A P. I.

### *Garden Nightshade.*

This is a plant of two feet in height; upright, branched, and spreading: the root is fibrous: the stalk is green,  
ribbed,

ribbed, and thick ; and the branches spread obliquely. The leaves are placed irregularly : they are broad, short, unequally indented, sometimes on the lower part of the plant scarce visibly ; and they are of a strong green : they have fleshy footstalks and pale thick ribs.

The flowers rise in clusters : they have a common support, and each also its separate pedicle : they are white, with a yellow button in the centre. Each flower is divided deep into five segments ; and the button is formed of the heads or antheræ of the five filaments.

Each flower is followed by a berry : this is round ; green at first, but when ripe black ; and contains several roundish seeds.

It is an autumnal plant : the flowers appear in August, the berries ripen in September, and the whole then lies. The seeds remain in the ground till the following May, and the young plants then appear.

It is frequent on all cultivated ground in gardens and in fields; and on dunghills.

The old authors call it *Solanum hortense*, *solanum vulgare*, and *Solanum officinarum*. Linnæus, *Solanum caule inermi herbaceo, foliis ovatis, dentato-angulatis, umbellis nutantibus*. Herbaceous and weak stalked Nightshade with oval dentated and somewhat angulated leaves, and drooping clusters of flowers.

This is the plant which was first by mistake used instead of the deadly Nightshade; and since has been sometimes continued by choice.

## C H A P. II.

### *Woody Nightshade.*

This, though the stalk be woody, is a weak straggling plant, too much extended in length to be supported upright by its slender stem; and either

creeps.



creeps on the ground, or climbs among bushes.

The stalk is brittle, though woody: the bark is of a pale brown on the older parts; but the young shoots are green.

The leaves are various on different parts of the plant: those on the older wood have two appendages, or as it were lesser leaves at their base: those on the younger shoots are simple, oblong, moderately broad and pointed; as the principal part of the leaf below. The footstalks which support these are long and slender, and the colour is a pale, but not unpleasant green.

The flowers grow in clusters as in the common Nightshade, and resemble them in form; but their colour is a violet blue. They have the same yellow button in the centre; composed of the convergent heads of the five filaments. The segments in the flower of this plant are deep, divided

vided and narrow; and they resemble, as in the other, five distinct petals. The common footstalk is long and slender; each flower has also its separate pedicle of some length on a subdivision of the first, and the clusters of flowers are handsomely disposed.

Each is succeeded by a berry: this is oblong, and, when ripe, red.

The cup of the flower in this and in the other kind remains with the fruit; in its natural size.

The plant is common about waters, and under damp hedges. It flowers in July, and the berries ripen at the end of August.

The old authors call it *Solanum lignosum*, *Solanum scandens*, *Dulcamara* and *Glycypicrus*. Linnaeus names it *Solanum caule inermi frutescente flexuoso, foliis superioribus hastatis, racemis cymosis*. Nightshade with a weak, bent, and shrubby stem, with the upper leaves of  
a spear

a spear pointed shape, and the flowers in clusters upon subdivided scattered footstalks.

We have given this in the present enquiry, only as it is a plant of the Nightshade kind: it has not been used till now to the same purposes with the former or succeeding; nor does it possess equal power.

### C H A P. III.

#### *Deadly Nightshade.*

This, which has been lately introduced into medicine in England, and is the occasion of the present treatise, is a very different plant from the other two: nothing but the accident of never having seen it, can lead any to use the other for it, or to mistake this for any other kind.

The plant is upright, firm, and three feet high.

The



The root is long, thick, and brown. The stalk is firm, round, of a dusky green, stained variously with purple or with brown, and divided toward the top into many rising branches.

The leaves are placed irregularly, and at distances from one another: they have thick footstalks; and they are large, and of a dusky green; oblong, considerably broad, sharp-pointed, occasionally waved a little at the edges, and slightly hairy.

The flowers are large, long, and hollow: they rise singly from the bosoms of the leaves; not in clusters as in the other kinds: and, they are of a dusky purplish hue with some little mixture of a redish or yellowish brown: they are striated and slightly hairy. Their hollow shape distinguishes them abundantly from the others; but they have a division of the same kind into five segments at the edge; and a cup  
formed

formed of one piece and cut as theirs into five parts.

Each flower is followed by a large black berry; rounded, but somewhat depressed: and the cup enlarges to defend it. Its bigness is that of a common cherry, its colour a shining black; and the aspect is so tempting, that one wonders nature should have bestowed it on a poison.

This is the plant recommended for the cure of cancers. It is, tho' a native of England, found but in few places; principally on banks where there is some shade, in church-yards, or under park pales.

The flowers appear in July, and the berries ripen in September.

The older authors call it *Solanum lethale*, *Solanum melano-cerasos*, and *Solanum manicum*: the later writers *Bella donna*, and *Atropa*. Linnaeus names it distinctly *Atropa caule herbaceo, foliis ovatis integris*. Her-  
baceous

baceous stalked Atropa with oval undivided leaves.

It stood long characterized as a poison ; and has been lately brought into use as a medicine ; with what success the following cases will best shew.

\*\*\*\*\*§\*\*\*\*\*

## S E C T. II.

### *Virtues of these Nightshades.*

We have observed in general that the virtues of these plants are different ; at least in degree. We shall proceed to enquire into them more particularly under each head.

The ancients have spoke of the effects of a peculiar kind of Nightshade : these were, intoxication, madness, and death. It has been  
sup-



supposed by Faber and others they meant the deadly Nightshade in these accounts; but it has been lately shewn to a certainty that this was not the plant they describe; nor does it appear that it was known to them\*.

The

\* The ancients speak of a *Solanum manicum*, *Solanum furiosum*, so named from its effects producing a temporary madness. They have been understood to mean this plant: but their commentators have erred: Mathioli is with reason to be excepted from the Censure; for he thought more truly, that it was unknown to them.

Their *Solanum*, whose name was simply the word *Strychnos*, had, in a smaller dose, the effects of inebriation; in a larger quantity it caused madness; and in a yet larger, death.

Thus much Theophrastus says of it. A Dram of the root given in wine, produced the lesser effect, two drams brought on the greater, three drams occasioned madness for life, and four were fatal. This is the account given by the father of natural knowledge; and this Dioscorides, and those who followed him, transcribed; adding, altering slightly, according to their particular opinions.

From these Greeks the Romans took their description. Pliny has joined the words of Theophrastus and Dioscorides; and most who came later have copy'd

The garden Nightshade they familiarly mention, and give large account of its virtues.

copy'd Pliny. Hence we have the history of the Greek Strychnos, and its Intoxications, which they called Strychnomania; the madness of Solanum; and all this late writers have attributed to the deadly Nightshade.

The old Greeks knew three Nightshades: the Garden Kind, which they held innocent; the Somniferous, which brought on drowsiness; and the furious or mad Nightshade, whose root in various doses occasioned these different Effects.

They have left descriptions of all these kinds, and none of them agree with our plant; neither do the doses. They assert, that a dram of the root of the Solanum furiosum might be given with safety; but a few grains of that of our deadly Nightshade have been found fatal.

The deadly Nightshade therefore is not the Solanum furiosum of the antients; nor do their Descriptions of that plant agree with it: for that had leaves like the Rocket, or Acanthus, and cluster'd berries as the Ivy. The deadly Nightshade does not appear to have been known to them; but it possesses the same qualities in a superior degree: a grain of it being equal in effect to a dram of theirs. It is able to bring on the Strychnomania, or Nightshade madness; and when taken inadvertently, is fatal. *Eden, N° 40*

## I.

*The virtues of garden Nightshade.*

The Greek writers mention this species very distinctly: Dioscorides calls it Στρογγυλὸς Κηπαιὸς, garden Nightshade; and has given such characters as render it impossible we should mistake the plant: from him the generality of others have taken their accounts. They give it the character of a refrigerant and anodyne, and recommend it *externally* in many cases; particularly, where it could be used with safety, in inflammations. We are surprised to find them all call it esculent: Dioscorides in particular speaks of it in this sense, and observes that its taste is inoffensive.

We have been taught to look on it in a light very different from that of an esculent plant: a mistake occasioned its first use in cancers internally, and it is said to have very considerable effects in so small a dose as half a grain.

*The*



## II.

*The virtues of woody Nightshade.*

This from the earliest time wherein we find it mentioned has stood recommended as a plant of innocent and salutary qualities. Sebizius recommends it extremely as an emollient and resolvent ; and its virtues in this respect have been ascertained by late experience.

It is recommended as a powerful diuretick ; and as particularly excellent in dropfies. The woody part is directed to be used in form of a very strong infusion. This Tragus says operates by stool and urine ; and he recommends it in the jaundice. Prævotius also mentions it as a cathartick ; and the English Parkinson confirms this quality on his own experience.

With these virtues the plant has been of late neglected ; but it is now

Since

brought into use again under the powerful auspices of Linnæus.

### III.

#### *The qualities of deadly Nightshade.*

We are to expect no notice, of the virtues of this plant in the earlier writers, for it was not known to them.

The first accounts we received of it were as a poison. Children who ate the berries died; and men ran mad, and were with difficulty restored to reason.

There appeared early some of enterprising tempers, who pushed very far the experiments of its medicinal qualities: these began with the distilled water. They limited the dose to three spoonfulls; and they say that in that quantity it was found excellent against inflammations of the viscera without any ill quality \*.

\* Mathiol. in Dioscord.

After this it was brought into use externally in inflammations, and hard tumors; and last of all in cancers.

The account of its first use we owe to Mathiolus; of the application of it to cancerous disorders Mr. Ray speaks, particularly in his history of plants, attributing the first knowledge of it to Mr. Percival Willughby.

Since that time the matter has been overlooked, till of late Dr. Lambergen, in his inaugural thesis, spoke of its virtues against this terrible disorder internally; and related the circumstances of a cure he had performed by it.

This led to its use in England; and its effects in a number of subsequent instances have occasion'd the present impartial state of the case.



## C A S E I.

**E**lizabeth West aged 66 had for some time been troubled with a foul ulcer on her leg near the ankle, and a glandular swelling on each side of her neck; for which she was admitted a Patient into *St. George's Hospital*. On the 15th of last June she took one grain of the leaf of the *Solanum Hortense* in infusion when she went to bed. This was continued the three succeeding nights: it occasioned each time of taking, great pain in the fore, and, she thought, rather an increase of perspiration and urine; it kept the Body lax, but sometimes excited vomiting. From the 18th of June to the 3d of August she took the same dose night and morning: during this period she found her fore a little easier at times, and the matter seemed better; but *nausea* afterwards coming on, with violent

C

com-

complaints of the head, and a temporary loss of sight, great heat, with flushings on the skin, and the sore beginning to spread, it was thought proper to discontinue it. Nitrous medicines were made use of in its room, till the inflammation was gone off, and the sore put on a better aspect. August the 10th, she began to take an infusion of the *Solanum Lethale*, the same dose as before, night and morning. This she continued to the 12th of September without any advantage to her leg; but with manifest injury to her health in general; as she became very feverish, complained of giddiness, and her eye-sight was so much impaired, that she could not distinguish one letter from another, or work at her needle; tho' she could both read and work extremely well before she took the medicine. This was thought to be a sufficient trial in the present case: other remedies were then given, by which the

the fore and swellings grew better. It is well known that old sores on the legs, for the generality, mend only by the common dressings and a horizontal posture, which was the case with this woman before she took the medicine, and was very apparent by one in a similar case, being placed in the next bed to her. I am really of opinion, that the infusion of the plants heating her, was the great obstacle to the sore's deterging: and must remark, that the quantity of urine was as great, and that she sweated as much, during the time the *Nightshade* was omitted, as when she took it.

\*\*\*\*\*§\*\*\*\*\*

## C A S E II.

**E**lizabeth Handell. aged 55, in June last was recommended as an out-patient to *St. George's Hospital*

C 2

for



for a *Gutta Rosacea*, or violent scorbutic eruption on her Face, with great swelling of the upper lip. In the 48th year of her age the *menfes* left her. Being naturally healthy, she neglected bleeding, &c. at that time. She did not feel any ill effects for upwards of a twelvemonth; but the succeeding year, she was often troubled with violent head-achs, frequently occasioning a delirium; about two years after the loss of her periodical discharges, she was seized with violent pain in her head, stomach, back, and extremities, frequent reachings, rigors, and other preceding symptoms of an eruptive fever. The violence of these continued four or five days, when she complained of great flushing of the right side of her face, which was succeeded by a large inflamed pimple under the eye on that side. The fever, heat in the cheek, and pustules went off in a few

few days : but the intense heat and eruption under the eye returned for 7 succeeding months at regular periods, continued for a few days and then went off by the use of gentle evacuations. About five years since, the eruptions became universal on her face, but particularly affected her upper lip. She was then advised to try variety of medicines, mercurials and antimonials, diet-drinks, alteratives of all kinds, and lastly the sea-water. About two years ago, she had a seton made in her neck, from which, only, she found benefit; but that drying up, a fontanel was made in her arm, which did not any way become a substitute to the other discharge.

On the 10th of June last she was ordered another seton near the place of the former, which began to discharge extremely well; and on the 17th she was directed to take the burnt sponge with nitre in lime-water, twice in the day, and purging salts twice in the week; this

course she continued till the 9th of July, and was considerably benefited, as the heat and redness of her face and swelling of her lip were remarkably abated; but being then patient in the house, and the *Nightshade* in the meridian of its reputation every thing else was laid aside, and one grain of the leaf in infusion was given night and morning. This producing a delirium with giddiness and dimness of sight, she was ordered to take it at night only, and she continued it to the 29th of that month. Sometimes purged her a little but had no effect either by sweat or urine; her face seemed cooler at times, and was less painful, but then for four or five succeeding days the symptoms returned with as much virulence as ever. The infusion was then omitted for some time, to try whether the castor did not give her relief by the discharge: her face became cooler again and the lip less, without doing any thing



thing for a week or ten days ; but the former redness, returning ; Aug. 13th, she began again to take one grain of the plant in infusion at bed-time, and continued it every night till the 7th of September : the dose was then increased to 2 grains, and taken every night to the 14th of October. It brought on great heat and thirst, and suppression of the *saliva* ; had not any effect on the secretions of urine or sweat, but rather occasioned the body to be lax : her disorder remain'd much the same as when she began to take the medicine, but on the 17th of October she was ordered to discontinue its use, as it brought on a difficulty of breathing.

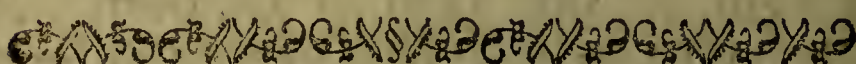
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### C A S E III.

*S*arah Cowley aged 30, with the same disorder, but less in degree, attempted to take the infusion in small

C 4                      quan-

quantities and at proper distances ; but it griped and purged her with such violence, that it was obliged to be discontinued after two or three unsuccessful attempts: it affected her eyes, but was not of the least service to the disorder of her face.



#### C A S E IV.

*S*arah Edwards aged 35. was admitted into *St. George's Hospital* with a foul ulcer, on her leg about the size of a half crown.

July the 18th she took one grain of the leaf of the *Solanum Lethale* in infusion when she went to bed. In less than half an hour it occasioned violent vomitings and purging, which continued for seven or eight hours without intermission: it was repeated at the distance of two or three days to a fourth trial, but its effects  
each

each time were equally sudden and violent with those of the first dose; and at last her eyes and head were affected by it.

The ulcer grew rather fouler; neither was she any way benefited by the medicine.

It was tried afterwards mixt with some of the saline Draughts; but was left off, as it still disagreed with her.

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## C A S E V.

*M*ary Parr aged 28 years, early in the last spring was seized with rigors, which were succeeded by a most violent fever, the effect of cold caught by lying in a damp room some time after her delivery. A blister was applied between her shoulders, which occasioned eruptions universally, and her fever abated: nevertheless, a sore throat, with

C 5

great



great pain in her joints came on : but these quitted her after some time. On the 6th of May last she was admitted a patient in *St. George's Hospital*. The eruptions, which were at first general, had now formed large blotches on several parts of her body, but particularly on her head and face, which were incruusted with broad, hard scabs. Her case from appearances was judged venereal, though the poor woman declared, she never had any reason to suspect it from any indisposition in her husband, or from symptoms in herself. She was ordered into the warm bath, preparative to her course of mercurial Frictions, which loosened the incrustations, and the subjacent ulcers began to discharge. Some of those on her body seemed to yield to the mercury, though it had but little effect on those of her head and face; and during the course, her right eyelid began to be affected with the same kind

kind of blotch, which ended in a *Lippitudo*. She continued under salivation seven weeks, as we were obliged to proceed with great caution in the introduction of the Mercury, she being extremely weak from the severity of her disease: during the course the bark was given with advantage. She was but little benefited from spitting; but when she had somewhat recovered her strength, she began, July the 16th, to take one grain of the *Solanum Lethale* in infusion at bed-time, which was continued to the 22d; she then took it night and morning for a few days. It occasioned *nausææ*, violent head-achs, and great dimness of sight; it purged her, but she made less urine than usual, and there was not any increase of perspiration; the old sores broke out, and those she had on her face spread very much soon after she had

began taking the medicine; particularly those on the *Ala Nasi* and underlip; which occasioned a great loss of substance in both; and when her lip healed, the remaining part attached itself on each side to the gums, and left a space of upwards of an inch and half. It disordered her so much, as to confine her to her bed, and she seemed sinking extremely fast. The *Nightshade* was discontinued; and the remarkable success we had in a similar case not long before, with the decoction of the *Sarsaparilla* root, made us recommend it for this poor creature, but with very little hopes of success, or indeed of her life. She took it with milk, a quart in the 24 hours, and in a month's time her sores were all healed, and she recovered her health and strength. The shocking appearance of her under jaw, being left so far uncovered, became now the object of our attention, as she was so well in other respects:



respects : I recollected how surpris-  
 ingly the lips would stretch ; and  
 determined to separate her under-  
 lip from its attachments, remove its  
 callosities, and attempt their union  
 by the pins and twisted suture, as  
 in the hare-lip, though I was great-  
 ly apprehensive, from the acrimo-  
 nious state of her blood and the  
 parts so forcibly extended, that an  
 inflammation would follow, which  
 would require the ligatures to be re-  
 moved before the union was effected.  
 In part I was not out in my judg-  
 ment, as a deep slough was formed  
 under the extremities of the pins,  
 though they were well defended  
 by little compresses, and remain'd  
 n. but four days : notwithstanding  
 this, it ended in a happy cure,  
 and she is not in the least disfigured  
 from the misfortune that happened  
 to her lip. The *Lippitudo* remain-  
 ing, I scarrified the *Tunica conjunctiva*  
 several times, which has now nearly  
 removed

removed that complaint, but the dimness of sight still remains.

The inducement to try the *Sarsaparilla* in the above case, arose from the service it had done a poor girl, who had been formerly salivated in one of the city hospitals, for large blotches which were thought venereal. They yielded a little to the mercury during her spitting; but soon after, the eruptions returned, and she was received into *St. George's*. Another salivation was recommended, which she underwent with as little advantage as formerly; she was considerably sunk by her course of mercury: there remained deep ulcers in her face, and the *Alæ Nasi* were almost destroyed by the sharpness of the humour. She began the decoction of the *Sarsaparilla* with milk, drank a quart in the day, and continued it for a month, by which means her sores healed, and she was restored to perfect health. From the  
 obser-

observations I have made, of the ill effects of mercury very often in scorbutic habits, I am apt to believe, that the above cases were both of them of that species, or inclining to the Lepra, and not venereal.

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## C A S E VI.

A Lady of a thin and delicate habit of body, had at times, been troubled with scorbutic complaints. When nature withdrew her usual assistance, the scorbutic humour was determined to the roof of the mouth and the *Sinus maxillaris*, or *Antrum highmorianum* as it is generally, though unjustly, called. The matter made its way through the socket in which a root of one of the *Dentes molares* had been formerly fixed; but by reason of some fungous flesh which had partly closed the

5                      aperture



aperture, some of the matter was detained. To give it free egress, a small piece of gentian root was introduced; which answered extremely well. She constantly complained of great pain behind the *Dentes incisores* of the upper jaw, on the same side; yet nothing at that time could be discovered by the nicest examination. Sometime after, the jaw was found carious near the first of the *Molares*; it was covered with some loose fungus, which was removed, and the foul bone came away; nevertheless the pain continued on the roof of the mouth and the membrane seemed a little thickened in that part. The lower jaw, after some time, was abridged of its motion, and in a few days was so locked, as to prevent the admission of any solids, though minced extremely small, except by the space left from the drawing of a tooth some time before. To add to her misfortunes, the maxillary gland on  
that

that side became affected. Every method was taken to hinder its suppurating, as the kind of sore that would follow, might easily be guess'd at, with such a habit of body: but notwithstanding our endeavours to prevent it, the tumor enlarged, inflamed, grew extremely painful, became an abscess, and burst. The discharge was thin and great in quantity, nevertheless the hardness and pain increased. Opiates were almost constantly given, though to little purpose, and every application was equally ineffectual in obtaining ease. It now confirmed itself, to be what was always suspected, *a true cancer*. By the strong importunities of her friends, she was prevailed on to make use of a person who gave her full assurances of ease in a few days, and a perfect cure in three weeks. As I did not flatter myself with the like success from any remedy I was acquainted with, I did not object to her

her making trial of him; for in these cases, the great secret, I believe, is to find out what will sit easiest on the sore, and to keep it clean. The hopes were but of short duration, for the pain was violent from the dressings, the sore spread extremely fast, and the promised time for ease elapsed without the promised success. I was then desired to take her under my care again. The great encomiums that had been given to the *Nightshade* at that time, for these kinds of sores, was the subject of conversation, not only amongst the gentlemen of the profession, but of the town in general. The tendernefs and humanity of the fair sex, ever makes them solicitous to relieve the distressed: consequently this new medicine was recommended as infallible: however, we did not want the hint, as she had then had a week's trial of it. The effects were as follow. At the time she began to take the infusion



fusion, she complained of great thirst, and sweat profusely, when the pain would permit her to lie still; the sore was foul, discharged a large quantity of ichorous matter, and was extremely painful; the circumference was of a purplish complexion, and extended towards the ear with great hardness.

The 6th of July she took one grain of the leaf of the *Nightshade* in infusion going to bed. The 7th of July she sweat violently as usual in the night, made rather more urine, complained of a darting pricking pain in the sore, and a head-ach in the morning, similar to that produced by her opiate at other times; 8th, did not take the infusion nor opiate the preceding night, nevertheless she sweat immoderately, particularly on the pit of the stomach: she had been costive for three days, but obtained stools by the medicine; the 9th, she took of the infusion equal to

to one grain; and this was continued almost every night to the 19th, without any other effect than sometimes one or or two stools in a day with griping, at other times without any; she always made less urine after taking the medicine; the head-ach as usual, but was this day, the 19th, attended with pain over the eyes: the sweats she had had, seemed dependent greatly on the weather, which was at that time very hot. The fore was extremely foul, and the discharge thin and very offensive; and the pain always increased excessively about an hour after taking the infusion. She now began to take the Dog and Duck water for her common drink; 20th, took her opiate last night, and equal to two grains of the infusion this morning: an hour after, took some asses milk; was easier in the fore than she had been for a long time; did not sweat much; felt an itching in the skin; the head-ach as usual; the discharge of a greenish colour

colour and much in quantity; the  
 mouth more closed. 21<sup>st</sup>, took two  
 grains of the infusion last night;  
 22<sup>d</sup>, took the opiate last night and  
 the infusion this morning: sweat more  
 last night, rested well, and the fore  
 easier; made less urine, but that with  
 great scalding; 23<sup>d</sup>, took two grains  
 last night and this morning, which oc-  
 casioned the piles and violent pain in  
 the fore; in other respects as usual.  
 24<sup>th</sup>, took the opiate over night and  
 the infusion in the morning. This day  
 the maxillary artery was discovered  
 bare by the acrimony of the matter:  
 the opiate at night, and two grains  
 in the morning of the infusion, with  
 the afs's milk, at a proper distance,  
 were continued to the 29<sup>th</sup> without  
 any alteration, except the jaw being  
 rather more locked: the dose was  
 now increased to four grains every  
 night; which occasioned more pain  
 in the fore, and greater heat in  
 making water; this was continued  
 for



for three days, but the pain preventing her getting any rest, one grain of the *Solanum* in infusion was added to the opiate, and the other three given in the morning; by this method she got more rest, and her head was less affected, but her appetite fell off. She continued taking one grain over night with the opiate, and three grains in the morning till the 13th of August, when she complained of great dimness of sight, a numbness of the integuments of her head, and her hands a little paralytic: her sore was extremely foul, with large deep sloughs; she was feverish, and had frequent rigors, after which she did not take any more of the *Solanum*; indeed the encouragement was so little during the whole time she had been taking it, that it was impossible to have pressed the farther use, especially after its effects had been so injurious. While she took the *Nightshade*, the sore constantly grew

grew fouler, the discharge was extremely foetid, thin, and acrimonious ; the pain was always increased about an hour after taking it ; the urine was less in quantity those days the medicine was taken, and what was made gave great pain ; the head-ach was not more violent, than what was consequent of her opiate at other times, till our last attack of the eyes, &c. The sweats could never be said to be the effect of the medicine ; it sometimes occasioned purging-stools with griping, but in general seldom more than one in a day : it is certain it was far from being of service in this case ; but it is highly probable, and I am apt to believe, she would not have mended under any other course, as her physicians had directed every thing that they judged could be of service to her. During this course of the *Solanum*, to aggravate this poor lady's misfortunes,

tunes, a large piece of fungous flesh, which was extremely sensible, dropt from the upper jaw, and covered intirely the space that was left between the teeth, by which she used to introduce her minced meat for nourishment: this, with the immobility of the Jaw, deprived her of any support from solids; the humour spread itself farther on the throat, which occasioned the greatest difficulty in deglutition, that her liquids were often forced back thro' her nose: the maxiliary gland on the other side became likewise affected, and nothing but a miserable prospect presented itself daily to our view. The wound grew cleaner by leaving off the infusion, granulations kept rising from the bottom of the sore, and the denuded artery soon became covered, but in other respects we were but little benefited. We afterwards relied entirely on opiates, and keeping the sore  
clean



clean by washing it frequently with the Lambeth water, and by easy dressings. Though in most other instances the paralytic symptoms went off in a few days, yet in this Case it was some weeks before the lady could either feel, or see distinctly. For want of sustenance equal to the greatness of the discharge, together with the hectic fever, the constant attendant on these cases, on the 8th of October she ended a miserable life

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## C A S E VII.

A Young lady had received a blow on her breast in September 1756. At times it gave her great pain. The beginning of July following, she perceived a little loose tumor, which soon grew harder and more painful, but more particularly so at certain periods. As I had  
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lately seen a person whose case, by relation, had been similar to the above-mentioned, and at that time seemed nearly cured by taking only three doses of the *Nightshade*; I thought I could do no less than recommend it to the gentleman who had the care of this Lady, as a proper remedy to be tried; and accordingly gave my authority for it.

He began July the 12th by giving her one grain of the leaf of the *Solanum Lethale* in infusion every other night till the 23d, which did not produce any very sensible effect; from which time it was continued every night to the 31st without much alteration, except *nauseæ* now and then: being very costive, a draught with *manna* was given, which had the desired effect. The dose was gradually increased to two grains at the like distances, and was continued from August the 1st to the 13th, without any other effect than the usual sickness.

She now began to take the quantity night and morning for days ; the consequences of which were great sickness, fainting, giddiness : it made her almost blind, her face was violently swell'd with large eruptions, but had not any sensible effect by the skin, urine, or sweat : the violence of the above symptoms did not abate for two or three days : the medicine was given afterwards only every other night, till the next morning, without any violent symptoms : the breast grew easier, and the hardness abated ; but for some particular reason the medicine was laid aside for a few days. September the 6th, she began it again, and took it every other night till the 13th : it occasioned great giddiness, head-ach, dimness of sight, and *nauseæ*. At this time being taken cold, her breast grew harder, enlarged again, and was in much pain as ever. She was or-



dered to omit taking the infusion till her cold was better. She bled, and took proper medicines that complaint. On the 2d of October we agreed to give it once every other night only. This was continued to the 16th: she found her breast rather easier for some days but the tumor was as hard as ever and no way diminished. The medicine always affected her violently, particularly her head, for twenty-hours after, so as to prevent her taking any nourishment. Not receiving her sight perfectly, as usual when the other effects went off, and no advantage appearing to the swelling, I could not press the further use of it.

## C A S E VIII.

A Young Woman about 20 years of age, was seized with a *paresis* after a lying-in; and it was with great difficulty she could get out her words: four months after this stroke she began to take the extract of the *Solanum Hortense* in infusion, and on the 15th of July she took one grain at bed-time; which had no other effect but a small increase of urine. 17th, it was repeated. 18th, she took one grain at night and morning, which occasion'd rather more urine and a violent head-ach. 20th, continued the infusion as before, which still brought on the head-ach; but her arm grew better, and she seemed to speak better: this method was pursued till the 23d, but occasioned *nauseæ*, violent reachings, head-ach as usual, sometimes three stools in a day: at length dimness of

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sight

fight came on, and pains all over her. She made but very little water from the 20th to the 23d, when she complained of swelling and tension of the abdomen, which increased towards the evening, and she was seized, like an hysterical person, with a suffocation and faintness, great chilliness of the extremities, a low trembling pulse, and difficulty of breathing: she took immediately some *Sp. volat. fœti* which a little recovered her: the *Solanum* was omitted, and she took *conf. damoc.* 3ß directly; this produced a large flux of urine, and plentiful sweats in the night. 24th her head-ach continued, her pulse low, the abdomen hard and swollen, and violent pains all over her; an oily draught with *manna* was directed, and after its operation she took the *conf. damoc.* as before. 25th she had one stool from the draught of yesterday, which took off the sickne



sickness at her stomach, and abated the tension of the belly ; she made a large quantity of lemon-coloured urine ; the pains of her head, &c. as the preceding day : was ordered to take *tinct. fulig. gutt. xxx* whenever the suffocation was troublesome ; this method was continued to the 31st, when the effects of the *Solanum* went off intirely.

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## C A S E IX.

**M**ARY Beach, aged sixty-two, had for many years enjoyed a perfect state of health ; but in March last, was attacked with great pain and heat in her right leg, which put on at first an erysipelatous appearance throughout its whole extent, with several cracks in different parts of the skin : in this state it constantly discharged an acrimonious watery

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humor : at length a small ulcer opened near the ankle, which spreading to the size of a half crown, and it's lips becoming callous, she was received into *St. George's Hospital*, on the 4th of May, 1757. The common dressings in those cases were applied, by which, and a horizontal posture, the ulcer grew better ; but the scorbutic eruption, with great heat, remaining, she began, May the 18th, to take some cooling physick twice in the week, and Nitrous powders in the intermediate days. The heat, &c. not yielding to this method, on the 23d. she was bled, and the former plan was pursued, but was ordered to make use of the *aq : Calcis & oleum Sambuci* shook together into the consistence of a cream : with this application the leg grew cool and easy, the erysipelatous eruption dried away, and the sore healed daily ; June the 7th, Lime-water and milk, twice in the day  
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was added to her former medicines; but the heat, &c, returning, it was changed for the Lambeth water. The sore continued healing; but the heat, &c. returning frequently, all her former medicines were discontinued, and on the 18th of July, she began to take the infusion of the *solanum*: it sweated her at first a good deal, rather increased the quantity of urine, and she thought her leg easier and cooler, since she had taken the medicine: one grain of the leaf in infusion, was continued every night, to the 28th, sometimes sweating her, at other times not; during this the eruptions appeared as florid as ever, and discharged as usual, but she had not the former heat and pain in her leg, and the ulcer was now nearly healed: on the 28th she was ordered to increase the dose to two grains every night, this was continued to the 3d. of August, when the ebbing and flowing of the watery humor, dur-



ing the whole time she had been taking the *Nightshade*, made us imagine little was to be expected from its farther use; and in its stead, after a dose of the purging mixture, she was directed to take the solution of the *sublimate mercury*. This she took one morning only. Some of the Gentlemen present were of opinion, we should give the *Nightshade* farther trial, as it had been of service to her at times: accordingly, on the 5th of August, the solution of the *corrosive sublimate* was omitted, and two grains in infusion of the *Nightshade* was pursued every night, 'till September the 10th. On the 18th of August, the sore was quite healed, but she complained of great pains in her leg: a fontanel was made in her other leg, in which, the same kind of humor with great itching soon appeared; the infusion had heated her during this last essay, had occasioned great thirst, and her

urine was much less in quantity at times. However, contrary to my expectation, she was discharged cured, as I was told, on the 14th of September last, except some few pimples of the same kind, which appeared on her body after her legs dried up; but in a fortnight after she was discharged, she came again to the hospital with the same humor in her legs as before.

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## C A S E. X.

*M*aurice Ferriter, aged 42, had some years been subject to scorbutic humors, but otherwise enjoyed a good state of health till July 1756, when he found a little crack in his under Lip, which frequently incrusted, but would not heal. He applied for assistance in the country, where every topical application rather occasioned the sore to

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spread :

spread: internals were likewise given, but without any advantage. On the 28th of June, 1757, he was admitted a patient in *St. George's Hospital*. The sore on his lip was then about an inch in length, and half an inch in breadth, extremely foul, its edges very callous, and the discharge ichorous. There was a hard tubercle somewhat lower on the chin: at times he felt shooting pricking pains, and the case had greatly a cancerous appearance. The man declared he never had any venereal complaint; yet chancres frequently appearing on those parts merely from contact, and when so, always yielding to a course of mercury, it was agreed to give him the chance of a salivation: but July the 1st, preparatory to that, he was bled, and took the purging salts twice in a week. The nitrous powders with barley-water were taken twice in the day to the 19th, when they were continued with half a pint of the



the decoction of the *Sarsaparilla*, instead of the Barley-water: this he pursued till the 27th, when he began to rub in the mercurial ointment to raise a salivation. During this course his fore spread extremely, from the acrimony of the *saliva* constantly driveling down the crack; and he was reduced so low, that he was obliged to be taken out of his mercurial course on the 12th of August. After he was purged, and a little restored by cordials, on the 22d, he took one grain of the *Solanum* in infusion going to bed, and repeated it the two following nights; but it occasioned such violent effects, particularly so great pain in his head, that for a time he was almost distracted. On the 25th he was directed to take it only every other night; but it disordered him so much, particularly in his head, that he declared, rather than take it again he would be discharged the

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house.

house. On the 31st he began the decoction of the *Sarsaparilla*, which he continued taking, a quart in a day, till the 19th of October, without being of any service to his lip. Since his salivation, a large *exostosis* was thrown out on the right side of the *maxilla inferior*. Three weeks after his salivation, some of the *alveoli* which were carious, came away with several of his teeth. The sore was larger than ever, and extremely painful at times; the discharge very great, and a constant driveling of the *saliva*. I must observe, that this man, soon after he came into the house, was afflicted at times with a head-ach, which I attributed to his breathing the air of the salivating-ward; and was inclined to think that the violent effects of the *Nightshade* in him might be owing to the mercury not having entirely quitted the body before it was tried. But to ascertain the fact, as he had been removed into another ward

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for some time; on the 19th of October I desired the Apothecary of the hospital would give him a grain of the *Solanum* in infusion at bed-time, disguised, so that he might not suspect what the medicine was, lest his former suffering might prejudice him in his report. 20th, did not find any ill effect from the infusion, nor any change whatever. 21st, took one grain and a half last night; it did not disagree with him as usual, but occasioned a difficulty in the discharging his urine, and it was less in quantity. 22d, the infusion was repeated last night and produced the same effects on the kidneys and bladder: he rested better than he had done for some months past, his lip was easier, and he felt less pain in his head in the night, but it returned this morning, tho' with less violence; he is to omit the medicine this Evening, lest the spasm on the neck of the bladder should be increas'd. 23d, had  
his



his head-ach as usual, and rested ill, but the difficulty in making water went off. 24th, took the infusion last night, rested but ill, his head-ach continued, and the sore was in as bad a state as ever. 25th, it was repeated last night, had the same effect on the kidnies and bladder as before. 26th, took the medicine last night, by which the difficulty in emptying his bladder was increased: it occasioned a total suppression at times; his head-ach returned with its usual violence, and his habit became costive: the sore grew more painful, and its aspect much the same as when this second trial of the infusion was begun.



A physician of great eminence, has been so obliging to favour me with the following account of the effects of the *Nightshade*, given to patients under his immediate care.

A lady,

A lady, on her *Menses* quitting her, was seized with great pain in the region of the navel; this was succeeded by a scirrhus tumor at the *Umbilicus*, which frequently discharged a thin fœtid matter: her legs were swelled, and her urine was high coloured: she took the leaf of the *Solanum Lethale* in infusion night and morning for three Weeks; it occasioned sometimes an increase of perspiration, and she made plenty of urine, by which the swelling of her legs abated, and has not since returned, though it is three months since she took the medicine: she thought she found ease in the tumor by its use, but in other respects its progress to the height of that disorder was made by hasty steps. The medicine occasioned a most prodigious thirst, took away her appetite, and affected her head so violently, that she could not be persuaded to go on with its use.

A gentle-

A gentlewoman, about 50 years of age, had her right-breast greatly enlarged, and extremely painful, with several small scirrhus tumors which could easily be felt in the substance of the breast; near the *sternum* there was a fistulous ulcer, which constantly discharged an ichorous matter. She had been attended for some time by a skilful surgeon, but without any signs of amendment. An infusion of the *Nightshade* was directed her night and morning for near three weeks, by which the discharge became more purulent, the indurations were almost gone, and the aspect of the tumor was more favorable; nevertheless its effects being nearly the same as in the former case, the patient could not be prevailed on to continue the medicine.

A young woman in the twenty-second year of her age, labouring under a suppression of her *menfes*, complained of a swelling on the left  
side



sides of the *abdomen*, which was attended with great pain : on examination, it was thought to be in the ovary. Evacuations, emmenagogues, &c. were ineffectually made use of. She was then directed to take an infusion of the *Nightshade*, which she pursued for a week : it was not of the least service to her complaints, but occasioned an intolerable heat and thirst, sickness at stomach, and giddiness, which made her resolve not to take any more of the medicine,

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It is not improbable but that some may find fault with those who have given this medicine in very large quantities ; I must therefore observe, that where the expected effects of any remedy do not appear by taking it in the dose usually prescribed, it will undoubtedly be necessary to increase the quantity, with caution, till either it answers the intention of giving

giving it, or should happen to prove detrimental in the particular instances for which it was recommended. I have given an infusion of the *Solanum Lethale* to some patients, from half a Grain every other night, to eight Grains every night, without any sensible effects; till the usual symptom of a temporary blindness came on, which deterred me from farther continuance of its use.

A gentleman, who is surgeon to one of our hospitals, has favoured me with the following case, in which the *Nightshade* produced a very extraordinary effect. A man aged 34 in February last, was seized with a violent inflammation and swelling of his whole face, arms, and legs; the skin was much more raised than in a common *erysipelas*, but in other respects it resembled that disease: he had likewise several tetterous eruptions, a fever and its attendants. He was treated for these complaints in  
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the usual manner, by which the violence of the symptoms abated : nevertheless the eruptions remained, and a great redness of the skin, which frequently cracked in different Parts, and discharged a thin, acrid humor, for which he took the antiscorbutic juices for some time, but with little advantage.

On the twelfth of July he was directed to take an infusion of the dried leaves of the *deadly Nightshade*, which he did for five succeeding nights : the first three doses occasioned violent sweats and an increase of urine ; the other two proved only diuretic ; by this he thought himself rather benefited. The medicine was obliged to be discontinued for some days for want of the plant ; but on the 22d he began an infusion of the fresh leaves of the *Solanum Lethale*. As the last two doses did not produce sweats, it was given in a larger quantity for three nights following,



lowing, it then occasioned a burning heat, though not the least moisture on the skin, but an increase of urine: after the last dose he threw up about five ounces of blood; however this was thought merely accidental at the time. As the patient was, at this period, as bad as when he began to take the medicine; and the want of success complained of in several instances being attributed, by the espousers of the *Solanum*, to its being given in an under-dose, the quantity was then considerably increased, which made him extremely hot and restless; that night, he was seized with a cough, and brought up some blood, though not quite so much as before: in the morning he complained of great giddiness, could scarce discern any thing, and his limbs were unable to support him; however, in the evening these ill effects of the medicine went off: it was now quite clear, that the  
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discharges of blood were occasioned by the *Nightshade*; and the gentleman who had the care of the poor man wanted resolution to continue its use: but the great expectations the patient had of being cured by this celebrated remedy got the better of the apprehensions of danger from the last flurry, and without the knowledge of his surgeon, as a second dose of the infusion, equal in quantity with the last, was taken in the house, he determined upon taking it: the effects were exactly the same as the former, only that the quantity of blood was rather less than the other times; but both doses prov'd diuretic. A prejudice in favour of the medicine, made the man resolve to have another trial; the dose was lessened to five grains of the *dried* leaves of the *deadly Nightshade*, which he continued for eleven nights following, without the least sensible effect; the medicine  
now

now loosing even its diuretic quality. After some days intermission he tried a few doses more in the same quantity; he was become extremely faint and low, and was much fallen away; the medicine had likewise lost all power as a promoter of the natural discharges of the body, and his complaints were as bad as when he first began to take it. Both patient and surgeon were wholly bereft of confidence in their new remedy; and by mutual consent, desisted from any farther pursuits of its effects.



I am informed by one of the gentlemen belonging to *St. Bartholomew's Hospital*, that the medicine has been given to several of their patients without any advantage, or even any sensible effects on the secretions in some, though the dose had been increased



creased to twelve grains of the leaf in infusion ; on the contrary, so much to the detriment of others, as determin'd them to discontinue it.

The rest of the gentlemen of the faculty who attend *St. George's Hospital*, have given the leaves of the *Solanum Lethale* and *Hortense*, in infusion, to several of their patients, viz. in epileptic, paralytic, rheumatic, dropical, scorbutic, scrophulous and cancerous cases, to some who had foul ulcers, and to others with disorders in the joints : the effects of the medicine were nearly the same as related in the foregoing cases, and with as little advantage.

By an account I have been favoured with from *Holland*, I find that the professors there, had made use of the *Nightshade* in some cancerous cases, without the least advantages which discouraged them so much as to lay it aside intirely.

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This medicine was likewise tried in the *London Hospital*: it generally affected the head and eyes of those who took it, but proved successful only in the following case. A man about fifty years old was admitted for a scorbutic hardness on the small of each leg so painful, that he could not stand on them; the usual medicines for such complaints had been made use of without any advantage: he was then directed to take an infusion of the *deadly Nightshade* morning and night, which was continued for three weeks; it sweated him gently, and generally gave him two stools in a day, but without any other effect excepting sometimes occasioning giddiness. In less than a month he was discharged cured.

It is with the greatest concern I must add, that by all the enquiries I have made amongst the gentlemen of

of eminence in the profession, I have not been able to collect a second instance to give credit to the medicine.

By the foregoing observations, it appears how extremely uncertain the *Nightshade* is in its operations, and how little to be depended on either as a cathartic, emetic, sudorific, or diuretic; and as an alterative, it has not been recommended.

The ill effects of these plants, tho' they have not been of very long duration in some, yet in others were too violent for us to risque farther attempts; if we sum up the account, we shall find they sometimes occasion'd sweats; other patients they purged, and vomited excessively, even to the throwing up of blood, but did not often increase the urine, as I found by ascertaining the quantity secreted before the medicine was given, and after taking of it; in several it occasioned either *nausea*, loss of appetite,



tite, *stupor*, head-ach, giddiness, dimness of sight, difficulty of swallowing and breathing, swelling of the *Abdomen*, numbness of the extremities, and other paralytic symptoms.

In several it gave great pain in the sores, or other parts affected, soon after taking it; in others it gave ulcers a disposition to spread; some it made feverish; it frequently occasioned costiveness, and interrupted the secretion of urine; these last effects were plainly owing to heat or spasms. I would not urge matters too far, but it has certainly proved a poison to one, under my own inspection as above related, though the doses of the *Garden Nightshade* did not exceed one grain at a time. I am informed, an infusion of the *Solanum Lethale* has hastened the deaths of more than one by the late experiments. The infusion of both plants have been frequently given without any sensible effect on the per-

persons who took them, though the quantity was increased at proper distances, as far as prudence would justify: others, whose expectations were raised from the character of the medicine, thought themselves better at first, on taking it; though it had not any effect on the ordinary evacuations of the body, but as the first transport passed away, the maladies returned in their full force. The eyes were frequently affected by the use of the medicine; in some patients but lightly, in others, the attacks were more violent, and continued so long, as to become very alarming: in two instances, the injury done to the eyes has hitherto resisted the power of remedies, tho' of some months standing.

The appearance of the eye, during the state of blindness brought on by the *Nightshade*, is exactly the same, as when the fore part of the brain is injured by concussion, or suf-



fers compression by a fracture of the skull: for whenever the optic nerves are impaired, whether in a *gutta serena*, by fever, or otherwise, the pupils for the generality are greatly dilated, and remain immoveable, even in the strongest light, till the nerves recover their former strength.

If we compare the various effects of the *Nightshade*, in the different patients, to whom it has of late been given, we shall find them nearly the same with those related by *Faber* in his *Historia strychnomaniæ*, when the juice of the plant was taken internally. “ He  
“ observed that it brought on disor-  
“ ders in the stomach and intestines, \*  
“ palpitations of the heart, and dif-  
“ ficulty of breathing; that it hurt  
“ the sight, impaired the memory,  
“ and sometimes was fatal: he like-  
“ wise takes notice of it’s occasioning

\* *Vires nocivæ et malignæ: Partes affectæ earumque sympt.*



“ a straitness of the throat, and diffi-  
 “ culty in swallowing ; and when  
 “ so, what is the remedy, as ap-  
 “ pears by the following case.

“ A woman, who by mistake  
 “ drank about two ounces of the  
 “ *Aq. Solani*, did not receive any  
 “ farther injury but it's occasioning  
 “ a stricture of the throat, which  
 “ spasm was removed, by gargling  
 “ with *Oxycrate*.

“ The nervous parts, he adds,  
 “ are chiefly affected by it, \* not only  
 “ the external but the internal,  
 “ which he thinks implies, that it is  
 “ not very hasty in passing out of  
 “ the body.” The symptoms, in  
 many, who took the infusion of this  
 plant, were those of a poison re-  
 ceived into the stomach, as appears  
 by the introduction of Dr. *Mead's*  
*mechanical account of poisons*, § where  
 he says, “ The nerves are prin-  
 “ cipally affected by poisons, and  
 “ when one part is infected, it im-

\* p. 41. § last. Edit. *Introduct.* p. 30.  
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“ mediately taints all the rest: and thus  
 “ the whole system of nervous ex-  
 “ pansion, is drawn into spasms and  
 “ convulsions; and, according to the  
 “ different offices of the parts to  
 “ which they belong, produce dif-  
 “ ferent symptoms. In the sto-  
 “ mach and intestines, these spasms  
 “ cause sickness, vomitings and  
 “ gripes; in the brain, *deliria*, sleep-  
 “ iness and epileptic fits; in the  
 “ heart, intermissions of the arterial  
 “ pulse, palpitations and swoonings;  
 “ in the lungs, difficulty of breath-  
 “ ing, with strangling and suffoca-  
 “ tion; in the liver, by the spasm-  
 “ dic contraction of the biliary ducts,  
 “ the bile is returned into the blood,  
 “ and makes a jaundice; in the kid-  
 “ nies, the same disposition of the uri-  
 “ nary canals interrupts the secretion  
 “ of urine, and makes it quite irregu-  
 “ lar. In short, the animal œconomy  
 “ is all disturbed: and though diffe-  
 “ rent poisons may shew their most  
 “ remarkable effects, in different  
 “ parts,



parts, and these, according to the violence of the hurt, may appear in very different degrees; yet the symptoms always make it plain, that the first bad impression is made upon the animal spirits."

*The Cicuta* or Hemlock has formerly been recommended for internal use; and experiments have since been made with it. Its effects, if taken by infusion in small quantities, are vomiting, giddiness, and dimness of sight, almost to blindness. It occasions spasms of the *larynx* and *Pharynx*: *Paulus Ægineta* adds, an over-dose will produce madness, and often death. Mr. *Ray* says, a scruple of the root in powder is an effectual diaphoretic in malignant fevers, &c. \* *P. Zachias* asserts, that lettuce juice taken in any great quantity is equally fatal with the *Cicuta* or *Mandragora*. Few people till of late were acquainted with the poiso-

\* *Hist. plantar. L. 9. p. 451.*



nous quality of the simple water distilled from the common laure which is extremely sudden in its effects: two ounces of it will kill a middle sized dog, in less than half a minute, even while it is passing down his throat. Dr. *Nicholls* was of opinion, that its poisonous quality was owing to the heavy oil which this plant yielded in distillation; it was of a kernelly flavour and taste.

He therefore tried some experiments with the red oil, produced by distillation from bitter almonds, after the sweet oil had been expressed: ten drops of which, mixt with a ounce of common water, would kill a dog in half an hour.\* The lacteals, &c. can rarely be shewn but in an animal newly kill'd; therefore in a course of anatomical lectures a dog is generally sacrificed: Dr. *Nicholls*, on this occasion, always

\* *Mead on poisons append. art. opium.*

destroyed the animal with laurel-water : a great mark of humanity, which I hope will always be *followed* by the Demonstrators of Anatomy : his other qualifications as a Teacher can not be so easily *imitated*.

The juice of elder-leaves, diluted with water, will occasion *nauseæ* and reaching, if taken into the stomach. The infusion of the leaves of the *Solanum lignosum* or *Dulcamara* increases the secretions of sweat and urine in some subjects, but in a less degree than either the *Hortense* or *Lethale*, which are nearly similar in their effects when given by an infusion of their leaves. Whether these poisonous plants are offensive to the nerves in general from the coldness of their juices, I cannot take upon me to determine, but it would seem so, if we give credit to the ancients, who class'd them according to that quality, and *Dioscorides* \* says,

\* L. 4. Ch. 66.



that *Nightshade*, in its nature, is cold, and was therefore used in inflammations. I am of opinion, that the external use of these plants for cancerous disorders, was first recommended from their supposed antiphlogistic quality; as the ancients concluded that cancers arose from excessive heat in the blood.

It is extremely obvious in those cases I have related, that the brain and nerves are frequently affected by the juices of these plants: and to what particular point the nerves may be vellicated without irrecoverably destroying their tone, we are as yet to learn; as they are inelastic, and not endued with the restitutive power of the blood-vessels, when over-stretched. It may so happen, with all our caution, in experiments of this kind, that the nervous system may be so injured, as to give but little chance for medicine to restore it to its pristine state; and we daily experience that of all the parts that compose the animal machine, the nerves, when distem-

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pered, are always found most difficult of cure : I am therefore induced to believe, from the little encouragement given by the repeated trials made of these plants in our Hospitals, as well as in private practice, that most of the gentlemen of the faculty will want resolution to persevere in its use, till they are informed, how it may be administered with more efficacy, and greater safety as a medicine.



From the histories related, in which such advantages were plainly owing to the *sarsaparilla*, it is natural to conclude, that we must have a very high opinion of its virtues. It is at present prescribed in almost all disorders arising from dyscrasy, and I dare believe is of equal service, in particular instances, with any of the medicated drinks : but a little success with any remedy, in a case  
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that had heretofore proved obstinate, is apt to prejudice the person who directed it so greatly in its favour, as to ascribe virtues to it, it has no right to: what can be more extolled than this root has been formerly as well as now, as a specific in the *Lues venerea*? and I solemnly declare, I never saw a single instance in my life, where it cured that disorder without the assistance of mercury, either given at the same time with it, or when it had been previously taken before the decoction was directed. It is of great use after a course of Mercury, and in my opinion is then generally necessary; for I have repeatedly observed, tho' the venereal *Virus* has most probably been carried off by the Mercury, soon after the patients were out of their course, the nocturnal pains and other symptoms have returned, and the patient has had great reason to think himself not cured; yet on taking a decoction of some of the woods, for a few weeks



weeks, the se frightful symptoms have vanished, and without a single grain more of Mercury, the patient has been restored to perfect health. This is what has given great repute to diet drinks, prepared by some antiquated Dame in a cellar, whose cookery perhaps was originally taken from a physician's prescription, or some of our dispensaries; but this is the channel to make medicines acceptable to the present age: others again; who are happily furnished with a never failing receipt for a diet drink, that cures the evil, gout, leprosy, &c. declare, they never give a grain of Mercury, yet we find by the state of the patients mouth, or bowels, that, *by accident a little of the corrosive sublimate had slip'd in, unknown to the Preparer*

I am far from denying the advantages of diet drinks: nor is it at all to be wondered at, that dilution, with the regimen usually enjoined for a length of time, should be  
greatly



greatly beneficial in many instances, by abating the acrimony of the juices, as the salts are carried off by some of the ordinary excretories; consequently a fair chance is given for the blood to be restored to a healthy state.

Being pressed some years since, to make trial of, the *Merc. sublimat. corros.* I gave it to several in pills, with the *Sulph. auratum antimonii*, and to others dissolved in the following manner, *R Merc. corros. sublim. drachm. duas sp. vini rect. unciam unam, stent per tres dies, filtra & fiat Tinctura.* I began with four drops at night to an adult in a spoonful or two of fair water, and gradually increased the dose, sometimes to twelve drops night and morning. These frequently removed the symptoms, especially eruptions, in about three weeks or a months time, but the complaints returning in several who had taken it, I discontinued its use at that time. It has been of late  
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revived, as a medicine in venereal complaints, tho' Dr. *Turner* in his *Siphilis* had assured us it would not do in his time. The great feats effected by this medicine, was the favourite topic with most of the gentlemen of the faculty on its late introduction into practice. About that time I had frequently the pleasure of meeting a gentleman who has long been distinguished as one of the most eminent of his profession, particularly in that branch which relates to venereal matters: in conversation I told him my opinion of the *Mercury sublimatus*, as I had tried it long ago, and found it could not be depended on; he said it was very true, for many years since, tho' the same medicine was recommended to a surgeon of great eminence in the city, with a pretence of the same miraculous effects: he found that it removed eruptions sooner than any medicine he had tried, and sometimes cured, but upon repeated trials it failed too often, to be depended on



on as a remedy. I mentioned the ill-success we had with it to several ; but was told, if it had not been given as recommended by *Van Swieten*, it could not be called a trial of the medicine. The authorities of late were so great concerning its success in the *Lues venerea*, that we were determined to give it another trial in the *Lock-Hospital* : none of the first twenty of which it was given as lately recommended, were of any great consequence, such as *original* chancres, buboes that were properly suppurated, and some with true pocky eruptions; the chancres healed most of them in three weeks time, but some of the buboes remained obstinate ; several of those who had eruptions returned in a fortnight as bad as ever. The symptoms of the next set were not all of so mild a nature, neither was our success quite so rapid as before ; for a greater number of these than one could naturally expect from a medicine of any considerable effi



cacy, were not at all relieved, and were obliged to rub in Mercury, even to mitigate the symptoms ; almost all those who took it in a morning, complained of great sickness and reaching : sometimes violent gripings were brought on by it ; some it disagreed with so much, that we could not pursue it even in the smallest quantities. One of the strongest recommendations of this remedy is, that it does not need confinement : yet we frequently observe it brings on a *Ptyalism*, tho' not very violent. Another set, whose cases were slight, and similar to those who had taken the mercurial solution, took bolusses of *crude Mercury* divided with *conserve of Roses* ; the effects of this medicine were the same in removing the symptoms, as the *corrosive sublimate*. To others, a grain of *calomel* was given every night ; the complaints as suddenly disappeared, as where the other two medicines had been given ; the *Merc. Calcinatus* was taken, a grain or ij. every night, and

and the patients were as soon relieved, as by either of the former medicines; some took a decoction of *Sarsaparilla*, with the mercurials, but those who did not take it, to all appearance, advanced as fast in their cure as those that did; it frequently made the solution disagree with their stomachs, tho' various methods were tried to prevent it.

From the above account it is plain, that the specific quality of the *Corrosive sublimate* is only as a mercurial, and that it cannot be depended on in venereal complaints, where the blood is contaminated: yet if novelty will recommend it to the favour of any, it is certainly as safe, and equally efficacious with Mercury in any other shape, given in very small quantities.

Great distinction must be made between a *chancre* which was got by immediate contact, and that which is owing to an effort of nature

ture to get rid of the malady ; for in the one case we are certain that by proper applications, and a few mercurial medicines, they will soften and heal ; neither is farther mischief to be expected : but should any hardness remain ; or should a *chancre* be produced consequent of *Virus* in the blood, there is no doubt but such cases will require a proper course of Mercury, with confinement, before we can pronounce a person free from the disease.

The taking notice of the *sublimate Mercury*, leads me to give some little account of Mercury in general. This mineral, when taken pure from the earth, is in a state of fluidity, extremely ponderous, yet capable of being divided into globules, *ad infinitum* ; when it has passed thro' the chemists fires, it becomes fixt, and tho' ground to an impalpable powder, when examined with glasses, it appears aculeated. Hence  
then



then it is evident, that when it is received into the blood in its original state, it must circulate with the mass, till it meets with obstruction; when, if not hurried, it will gently gain an *exit* thro' some excretory, by adapting itself to the size of the orifice, thro' which it is to pass: more globules, taking the same *route*, and uniting, by their weight enlarge the diameter of the tube; by which, with dilution, the obstructed matter is attenuated, and made capable to pass off from the body.

Whatever complexion it may obtain from chemical processes, when once it enters the blood, thus altered, its action, both on the vessels and their contents, must be merely by its *Spicula*.

If any medicine deserves the title of a *Deobstruent*, it must be Mercury, when *properly* given; for on this depends the success of every specific. Few will object to my assertion of  
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its power in removing obstructions, but many are satisfied if the name mercurial be applied to the medicine, not considering the different effects in its primitive state, from those when it is changed by fire, &c. Many years experience of the facts inform me, that mercurials which act by their *spicula*, when taken by the mouth, where tumors were greatly indurated and long obstructed, almost always irritated and increased their size, or else by inflaming suppurated them. In similar cases, where emollient ointments, blended with Mercury, were for some time rubbed into the part affected, previous to the administration of mercurial preparations internally; they seldom failed of success without the formation of matter; provided we were not too much in a hurry.

It is no uncommon thing to pour down large quantities of crude Mercury, in order to obtain a passage, in what is call'd the *miserere mei*, or  
*iliac*

*iliac passion* ; after strong cathartics have ineffectually been given. From examining the parts of those who have died with this disorder, the origin of the complaint appeared to have been a spasm on part of the gut; from which stricture, the food would consequently be impeded, and the intestine immediately above the malady, must gradually become dilated from the quantity of aliment constantly descending. The distention at length hangs over the constricted part, and gives the appearance of being received into it: by the pressure of the contents surrounding it and the weight of the Mercury, the circulation in its coats will be obstructed and an inflammation follows, which most frequently ends in a gangrene. Hence it is evident, that the quantity of the Mercury must be sufficient to overflow the surrounding *sacculus* before the orifice of the stricture can be acted on to force a passage. *Query*, whether it is not most likely that



that a mortification will sooner happen where *Quick-silver* with this view is given, than where it is omitted; as the Mercury has been almost always found, on dissection, in the *sacculus*? and whether oil in large quantity, mixed with a lenient cathartic, would not bid fairer for relief by blunting the acrimony of the matter that occasioned the convulsion, than giving any of the rough stimulating purges with *Calomel*?

The hasty introduction of Mercury into the blood, I believe, was one great reason practitioners were formerly so often disappointed of their cures in venereal cases: the whole that they seemed to have in view, was making of deep sloughs in the mouth, from which a most offensive discharge of *saliva* was obtain'd. Observation and the knowledge of the parts convince us that this attack is merely accidental: for where the excretory vessels of the

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skin are free and open, from the climate, Mercury will pass off the way; and effectual cures have been obtained merely by that emunctory. Again, where the glands of the mouth are compact in their structure, and the kidneys in that subject more lax in their texture, we have often found in spite of our endeavours to force the Mercury to the mouth, it proved a diuretic, and the venereal *virus* passing off with the torrent of urine, the patient at last received a perfect state of health as if he had been tortured with the highest salivation. These observations, I suppose, induced others to try mercurial frictions; but not being assisted by the usual perspiration of warm climates, to prevent the Mercury from going to the mouths of their patients every second or third day cathartics were given: this determined the Mercury to the intestines, which

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quitting the body too soon, frequently deprived the patients of their cure.

It is an undeniable fact, that Mercury will make its way through the different emunctories of the body, in different subjects; and if the capacities of the excretory tubes are sufficiently large to permit the peccant matter to pass off from the blood, it is quite immaterial whether it is effected by means of the salivary glands, the skin, or the kidneys.

This premised, it will easily be determined which channel is most eligible; for, exclusive of the danger of Mercury's attacking the head, the horrors of a salivation should, if possible, be avoided: the skin alone will not answer our intention in this country; therefore an increased quantity of urine will be deemed the preferable means to obtain a cure, if the experience of others should determine in its favour.



To dispose the skin to do its part as well as to receive the Mercury, the patients should frequently go in to tepid baths, and have the skin well cleaned when in them. The Mercury must be introduced by gentle steps, and be the divided *hydrargyrum*. The globules should have time to roll in the blood, to answer the purposes of an attenuation and gradually to dilate the excretories intended to be employed; and to gain our point diuretics are sometimes necessary, and astringent gargarisms; but when once the Mercury is determined to the kidneys we make efforts to get rid of the noxious matter, as well by drinking plentifully of small liquors, by rubbing in very large quantities of the ointment towards the latter end of the course; which may be done without any hazard to the patient. It is generally proposed to take away a few ounces of blood from

from the arm, the day following the last friction ; which gives room in the vessels to exert their force on the contained fluid. A few bathings, and a dose or two of lenient phyfic finishes the plan, as far as relates to the mercurial course. A decoction of *Sarsaparilla* with milk should be drank for some time after, made first by infusion, as *Andreas Vesalius* advises ; but the decoction should be much stronger, viz. two ounces of the root to a quart of the strained liquor, which cannot be too slow in preparing : the patient may begin with a pint in the 24 hours : but when the stomach is a little habituated to it, double that quantity ought to be taken in the same time, and this to be continued for a fortnight or three weeks at least ; a few drops of *tincture* of *antimony* may be added to each dose of the decoction night and morning, which promotes a gentle *diaphoresis*, if the patient takes it warm,  
and

and continues in bed some time afterwards : how far this may be necessary to confirm a cure I will not take upon me to determine ; neither can I ascertain its specific quality as a sweetener of the blood, or as a restorative ; but it is certain that a fairer chance for health is given, if the Mercury is thus facilitated in making its way out of the body after it has done its duty, than by too sudden a repletion, or the patient returning immediately to his usual way of living.